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**VIENNA 2025**  
24-25 JUNE 



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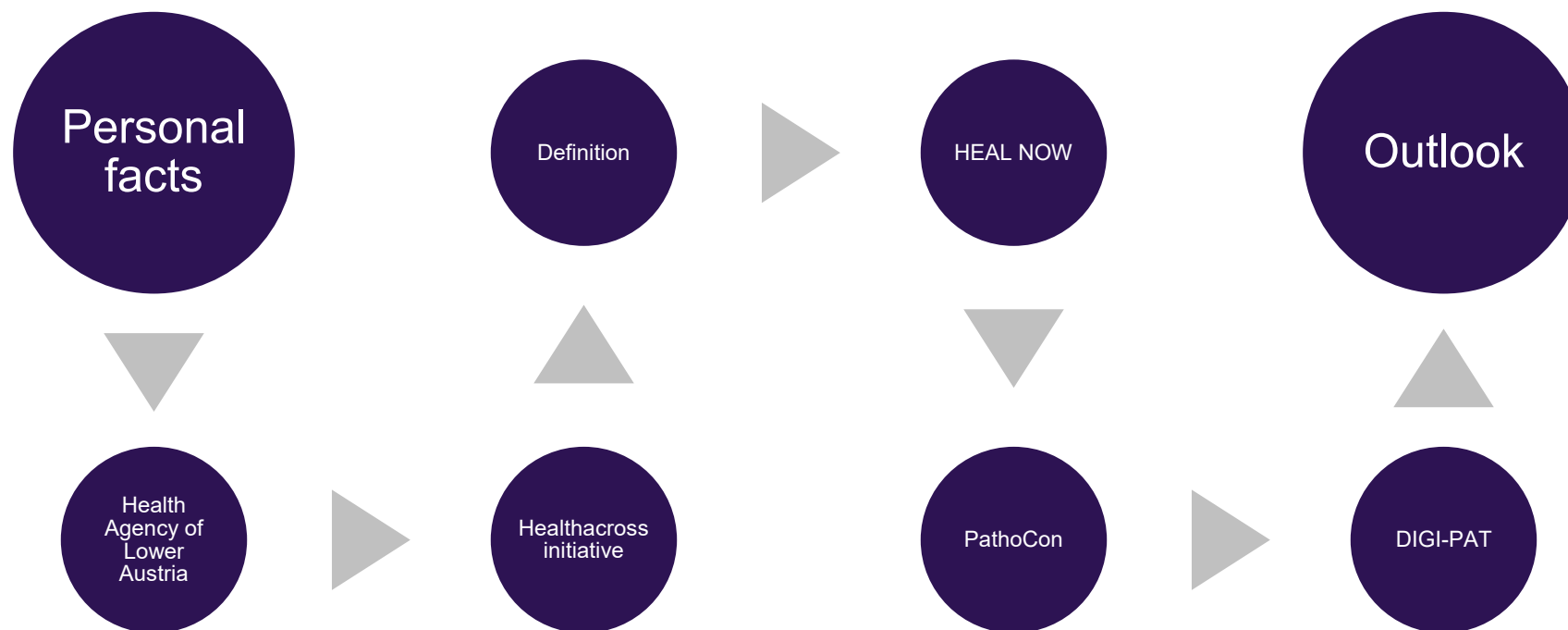
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# Keynote Speech: Digital Pathology across borders

How the Healthacross initiative is trying to set a new milestone in the field of European territorial cooperation

## Agenda



## Personal facts



- Florian Lochner, MA
- Master's degree in business administration
- EU Project Manager @Healthacross initiative
  - Health Agency of Lower Austria
- Implementing EU-funded cross-border health projects
- Started to work in the field of (digital) pathology in 2019

## Health Agency of Lower Austria



### Lower Austria:

Area: 19,179 km<sup>2</sup>

Foreign borders: 414 km with the  
Czech Republic and Slovakia

Close proximity to Hungary

Population: 1.7 million

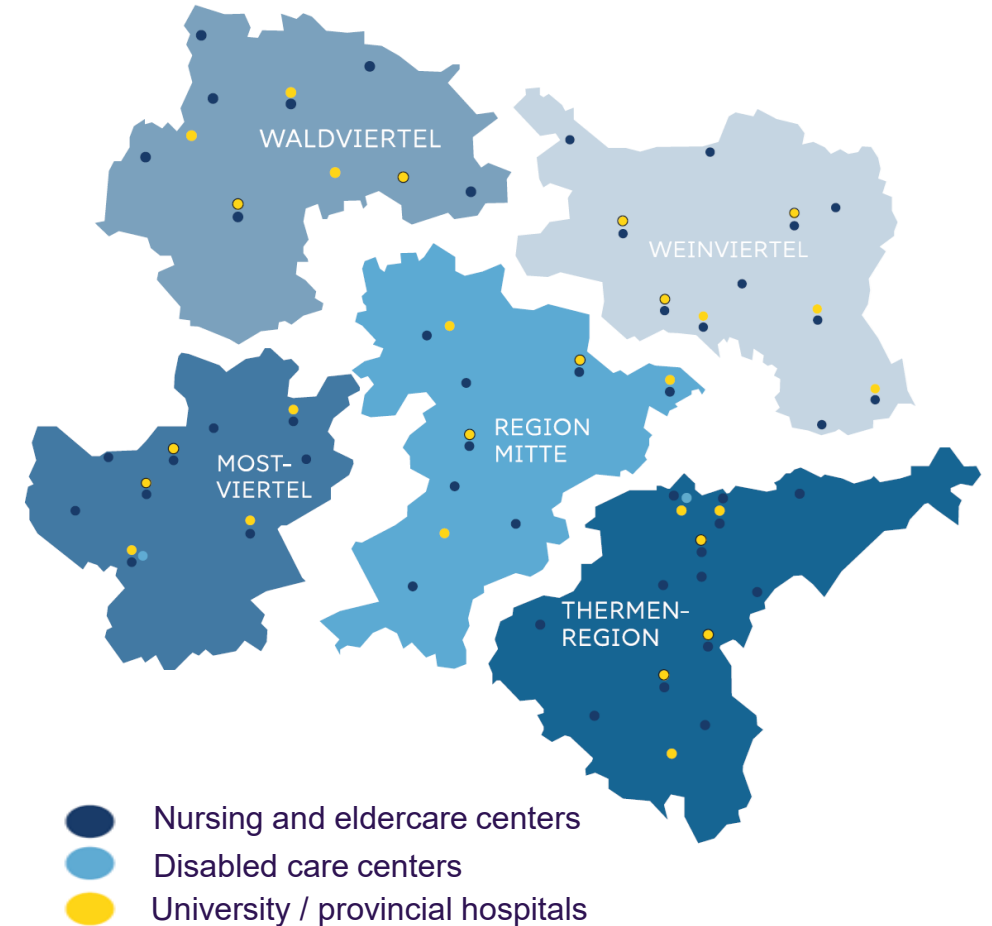
### Umbrella organization for:

27 university and provincial hospitals

11 locations of training colleges for  
healthcare and nursing

48 nursing and eldercare centers

2 disabled care centers

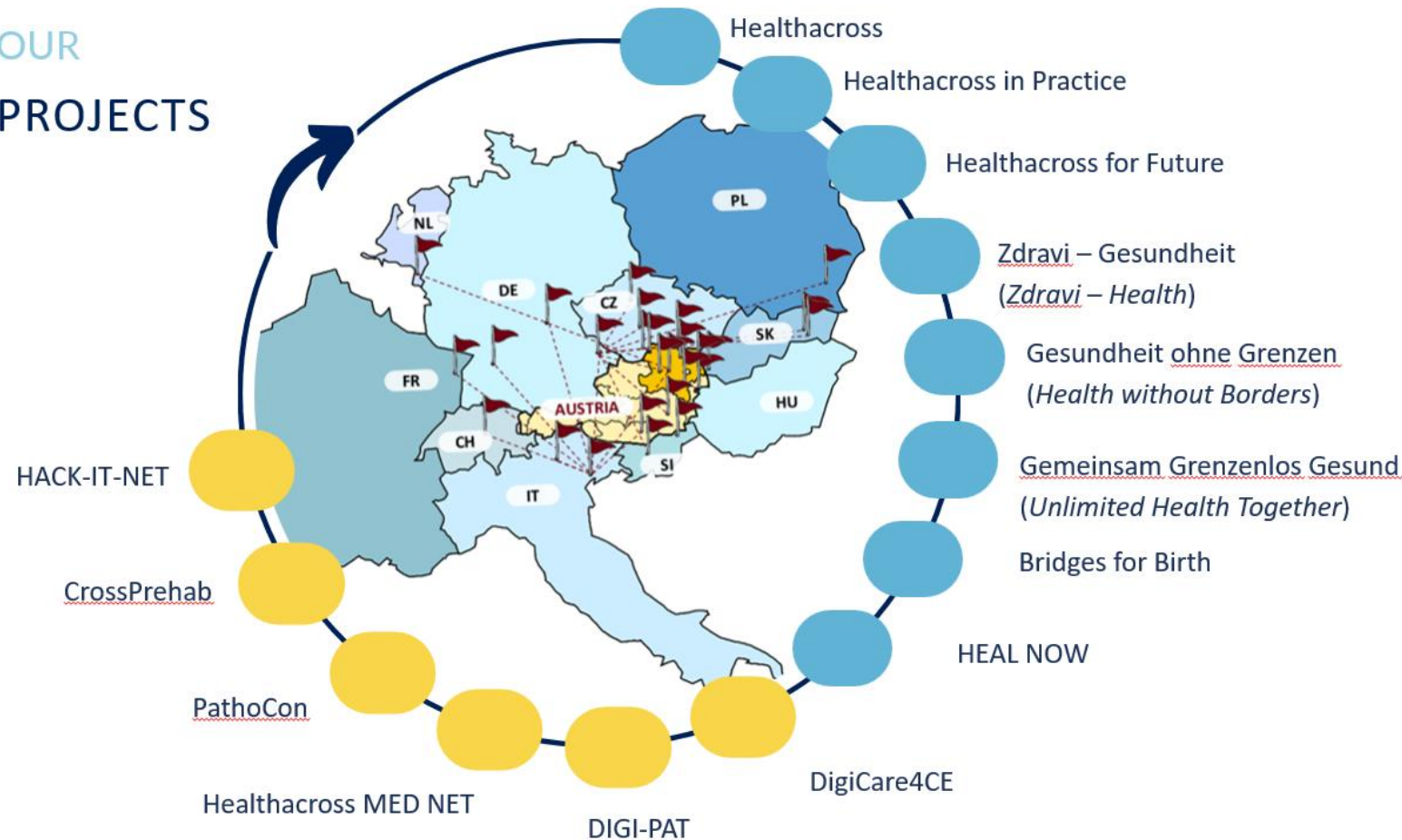


## Healthacross initiative

### Our Objectives:

- Equal access to quality healthcare services close to home
- Simplification of cross-border healthcare and patient mobility
- Establishing and securing long-term international cooperation in the healthcare sector
- Initiation and implementation of innovative cross-border EU projects in the healthcare sector

### OUR PROJECTS

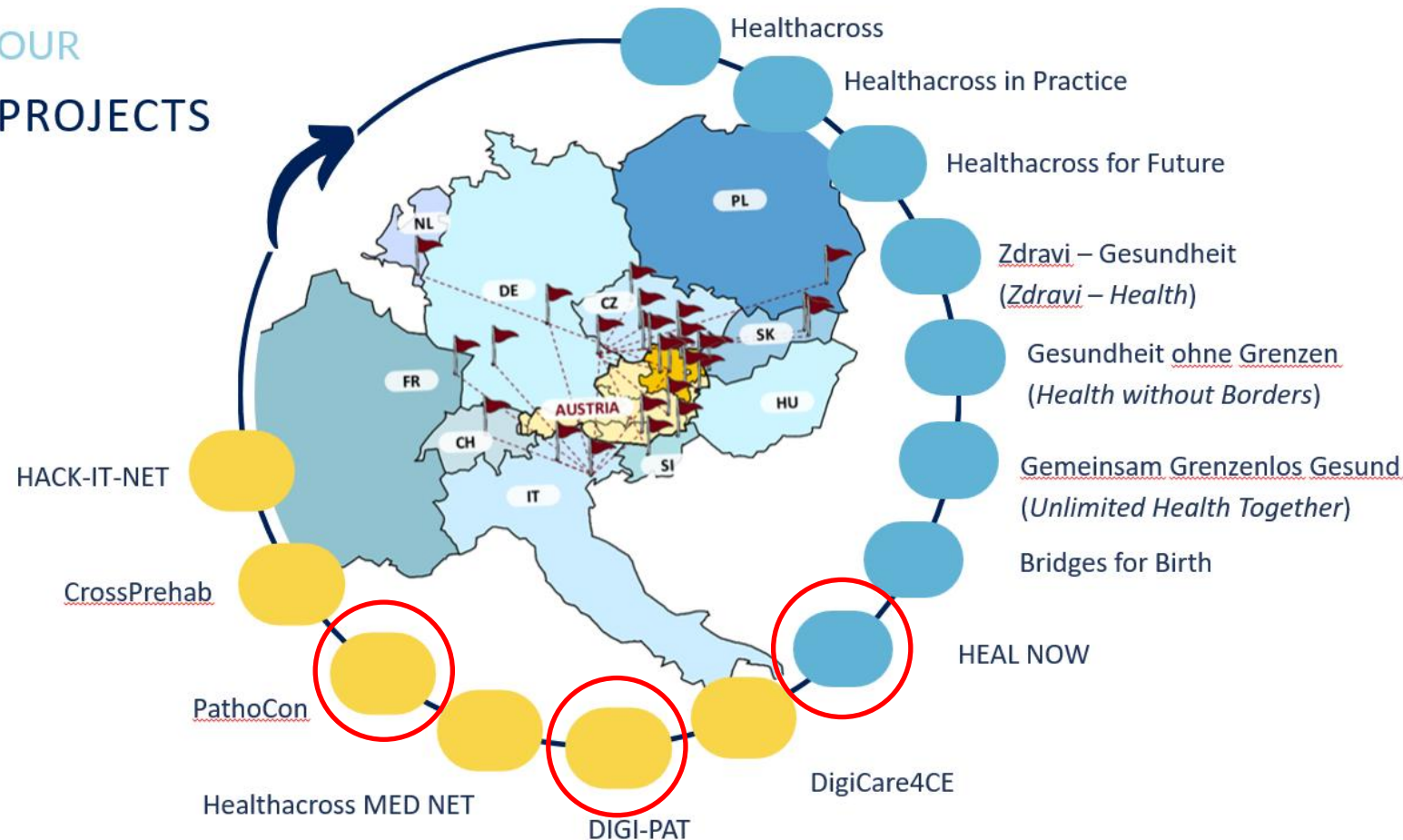


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## What is digital pathology actually?

*„Process of digitising the histological sections and their digital assessment / examination“*

### 4 categories:

- IT-equipment (e.g. digital slide-scanners, bandwidth, etc.)
- Integration of the IT-equipment into hospital systems
- Digital workflow – digital pathology needs a holistic view on the topic
- Artificial intelligence (Add-On)

## HEAL NOW

- first cross-border project in health between AT & HU
  - Lasted from 2020 – 2022 incl. a budget of approx. 580.000€ (85% ERDF)
  - Main results:
    - Strategic plan „Cooperation Agenda 2030“
    - Initiation of the bilateral rescue treaty
    - Hospital cooperation in the field of digital pathology
- ➔ 2 digital slide scanners for research purpose for the hospital of Wr. Neustadt – collaboration between Sopron and Wr. Neustadt started



## PathoCon

- Lasting from October 2024 – March 2026, including a budget of approx. 188.000€ (80% ERDF)
- Establishing of an institutional cooperation in the field of digital pathology between Lower Austria and Hungary

Expected output: signing of a bilateral cooperation agreement, including:

- Legal and regulatory aspects
- Financial aspects
- Technical aspects
- Data protection aspects



## DIGI-PAT

*“Structural reform of organizational and process models in digital pathology for person-centered and holistic cancer care”*

➔ Shaping a path towards digital pathology **throughout Lower Austria**

- Duration: November 2023 – November 2025
- Budget: € 450,000 (100% financed from European funds)
- EU program: Technical support instrument (TSI)

External experts / partners:

- European Commission, DG REFORM
- Maastricht University Medical Centre



## DIGI-PAT

- 1 **Analysis** of current **pathological** (internal & external) **workflows** and processes
- 2 Development of a **digital process model** for the most efficient working processes possible in the future - including train-the-trainer activities
- 3 Development of a **roadmap** for the gradual implementation of digital pathology throughout Lower Austria
- 4 **Support** in the preparation of tender documents

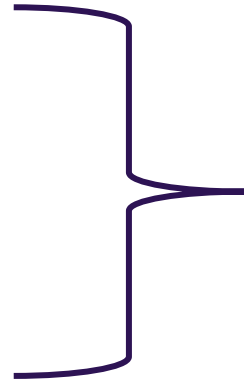


→ Standardised **PMIS** was implemented in parallel

## Outlook for the coming years

### Implementation is unavoidable:

- Higher quality
- Faster diagnosis
- Remote access
- Enhanced education
- AI integration



### But...:

- High initial costs (Hardware, Software, etc.)
- Data management
- Integration / interoperability
- Workflow disruption
- Technical challenges (image quality, etc.)

*“Digital pathology is not just one technical project among many – it means progress for the benefit of patients while making efficient use of human and financial resources.”*

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Thank you for your  
attention!



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